

**FRESNO, CA** – On Friday, May 8<sup>th</sup> Congressman Jim Costa (D-Fresno) will officially announce James Torres of Hallmark Charter School as this year's winner of the annual Congressional Art Competition. Torres is a senior and his painting titled "Impressions of the San Joaquin Valley" will be sent to Washington, DC next month to be on display in the Cannon tunnel for one year. His artwork will be displayed with other winning artwork from around the nation.

"One again, the artistic talent of young men and women came shining through for this year's Congressional Art Competition," said Costa. "This is one of my favorite events we hold each year, and I enjoy meeting all the up and coming artists in our Valley. I want to thank all who entered and I am looking forward to seeing James' art next to other winners around the nation."

Since 1982, the Congressional Art Competition has honored the creative talents of thousands of high school students across the nation. Local competitions are voluntarily hosted by Members of Congress in their home districts. In June, the winning artwork is sent to Washington, and winners are invited to the Capitol for a ribbon-cutting ceremony and Congressional reception. The competition receives over 500 entries every year. Torres' artwork will replace "Thinking of You", a piece created by Johnny Reyes of Hanford, California.

Katie Olds, a senior at Hanford West High School, won second place with a piece titled "Woman With the Hat", and the third place winner was Sadie Mendoza, a sophomore at Hallmark Charter School, with a piece titled "Eye of the Flower".

Costa will host the event starting at 5:00pm on Friday May 8<sup>th</sup> at the Fresno Metropolitan Museum of Art and Science. The Museum is located at 1515 Van Ness, Fresno, CA 93721.